THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) to (c) After considering all problems relating to the dependency of Formations and Units in and around Calcutta, as a part of an overall plan to streamline and modernise Ordnance Cover to all Units, an Expert Committee has recommended to the Army Headquarters the shifting of the Ordnance Depot, Calcutta to Panagarh. No Proposal has so far been received in the Ministry of Defence from the Army Headquarters, in this regard.

Raising fund through Real Estate

1005. PROF. SAURIN BHATTACHARYA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any plan has been received from Sub-Area Commander (Calcutta) for raising fund through real estate business involving 294 acres of land in Calcutta Maidan owned by the Defence Department;

(b) whether 81 clubs and offices utilise this stretch of land under leasehold title; and

(c) whether the Ministry of Defence has been asked to mobilise funds through sale of vacant prime land ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) to (c) Pockets of Defence land at Calcutta Maidan have been leased to 67 clubs/organisations which are mostly engaged in sports activities. Some portions of land have also been leased/transferred to the State Government while a few have been encroached upon.

As of now, there is no plan to mobilise funds through sale of vacant prime Defence land in Calcutta city.

Crashing of 30 MIG-21 Planes

1006. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be plased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to news item that appeared in the Indian Express dated the 25th July, 1992 that as many as 30 MIG-21 planes crashed during the last three years killing 14 pilots which was a colossal loss to the nation in terms of public money and trained personnel;

(b) whether any enquiry was instituted in this regard;

(c) if so, what were the findings of the enquiry; and

(d) what precautions have been taken to ensure that such tragic accident could be avoided in future in the interest of the nation ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The accidents were caused due to human error (air crew), technical defects, bird strike, natural and operational risks, etc.

(d) Efforts to minimise accidents are an ongoing process. Every accident is investigated by a Court of Inquiry comprising concerned specialists. Based on the recommendations of the Court of Inquiry, follow up action is taken to prevent recurrence of similar accidents. Whenever any adverse trend or weak area is observed, special joint studies are carried out with the help of specialists from the manufacturers and the users to closely examine the problem and take suitable remedial measures. Action on the various recommendations of a High Level Committee which examined all aspects of Flight Safety, accepted by Government, has been completed.

Defence ties with Israel

1007. SHRI SUKOMAL SEN :
SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question 1023 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 20th July, 1992 and state :

(a) whether it is a fact that India is going to enter into defence ties with Israel;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what are the areas in which such ties are proposed to be signed ?